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## MARICOPA ASSOCIATION OF GOVERNMENTS REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION PLAN

### AFRICAN-AMERICAN FOCUS GROUP RESULTS

The Maricopa Association of Governments (MAG) is developing a new Regional Transportation Plan for the MAG region. As part of this effort, MAG conducted a series of focus groups to identify and document transportation issues and concerns. The focus groups were held throughout the Valley to capture ideas from geographically and ethnically diverse groups of participants. The findings will assist MAG in identifying regional values, goals and objectives that will guide the development of the Regional Transportation Plan.

The format of the focus groups included an opportunity for interactive discussion among participants, as well as a voting exercise that provided insight on priorities. To help structure the process, the discussions were organized into five topic areas. The topics included:

- ✕ Demographic and Social Change;
- ✕ The New Economy;
- ✕ Environmental and Resource Issues;
- ✕ Land Use and Urban Development; and
- ✕ Transportation and Technology.

Participants were encouraged to provide their own issues and concerns that related to each topic, both individually and in a round-table discussion. The responses received were documented in essentially a “verbatim” format so that the message intended by the participant was accurately conveyed.

The results of the **African-American Focus Group** are attached. This material has been divided into two parts as follows:



**Part I. Key Focus Group Issues:** In Part I, the key issues identified at the African-American Focus Group are listed by topic area. These issues are those voted by the participants to be the top two concerns in each topic area. Due to ties, certain topics may have more than two issues listed.

**Part II. Comprehensive Listing of Participant Issues:** In Part II, all the issues identified by the individual participants are listed. These issues have been grouped by topic area.

If you have any questions or comments on the focus group process or the attached results, please contact Roger Herzog, MAG, at 602-254-6300 or rherzog@mag.maricopa.gov



## AFRICAN-AMERICAN FOCUS GROUP

### PART I. KEY FOCUS GROUP ISSUES

The participants of the African-American Focus Group were given the opportunity to vote on their top two issues in each of five topic areas. The two issues receiving the most votes are listed under each topic. Due to ties, certain topics may have more than two issues listed.

#### *DEMOGRAPHIC AND SOCIAL CHANGE PRIMARY ISSUES*

- ✖ There is a need for more minority contractors and participation in the process of contracting (specifically African-American).
- ✖ Need adequate transportation facilities in South Phoenix.

#### *THE NEW ECONOMY PRIMARY ISSUES*

- ✖ Need to develop funding sources for transportation (allocate federal funds differently; less reliance on local sources).
- ✖ Industries drive education; challenge educators to teach science and engineering.
- ✖ Need higher quality jobs.
- ✖ Need private sector investment in communities; including the transportation system.

#### *ENVIRONMENT AND RESOURCES PRIMARY ISSUES*

- ✖ More federal involvement in local planning.

#### *LAND USE AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT PRIMARY ISSUES*

- ✖ By creating transportation facilities in blighted areas, these neighborhoods can be resuscitated by creating jobs and breaking the cycle of poverty.
- ✖ Need transportation facilities near jobs.



### **TRANSPORTATION AND TECHNOLOGY PRIMARY ISSUES**

- ✖ Need more freeways in “infill” areas to serve areas in between loops.
- ✖ Improve major streets and the existing infrastructure.

## **PART II. COMPREHENSIVE LISTING OF PARTICIPANTS ISSUES**

The following is a comprehensive listing of the issues that individual participants of the African-American Focus Group identified as their concerns under each topic.

### **DEMOGRAPHIC AND SOCIAL CHANGE ISSUES**

- ✖ If growth is massive, then there will be a need for more than just buses into local neighborhoods.
- ✖ Need to develop mass transit.
- ✖ Elderly mobility issues should be addressed.
- ✖ Need “around the clock” services.
- ✖ Look at jobs-to-people ratios, and place transit stations where they are most needed.
- ✖ Address housing issues.
- ✖ Need adequate transportation facilities in South Phoenix.
- ✖ Need to look at more innovative solutions; need higher technology that is “with the time.”
- ✖ There is a need for more minority contractors and participation in the process of contracting (specifically African-American).
- ✖ There needs to be an equitable distribution of jobs; and operating contracts.
- ✖ There needs to be more grass roots inclusion of the African-American community in planning.
- ✖ There is a need for Spanish signage on rail lines.



### THE NEW ECONOMY ISSUES

- ✖ Industries drive education; challenge educators to teach science and engineering.
- ✖ Need higher quality jobs.
  - ✖ Large, high quality industries do not like right-to-work states and low paying wages, because they cannot keep skilled labor.
- ✖ Need private sector investment in communities; including the transportation system.
  - ✖ Need to develop funding sources for transportation (allocate federal funds differently; less reliance on local sources).

### ENVIRONMENT AND RESOURCES ISSUES

- ✖ More federal involvement in local transportation.

### LAND USE AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT ISSUES

- ✖ Need new, multi-modal corridors.
- ✖ Industry needs to also locate in minority communities in the inner city, and not just on the fringe areas.
- ✖ By creating transportation facilities in blighted areas, these neighborhoods can be resuscitated by creating jobs and breaking the cycle of poverty.
- ✖ Freeways can encourage good development.
- ✖ Need transportation facilities near jobs.
- ✖ Rail needs to service the entire Valley.

### TRANSPORTATION AND TECHNOLOGY ISSUES

- ✖ Need more freeways in “infill” areas to serve areas in between loops.
- ✖ Improve major streets and the existing infrastructure.
- ✖ Need to look at safety issues (specifically on Grand Avenue, and 19<sup>th</sup> Avenue/Grand-McDowell).
- ✖ It is okay to invest in transportation, as this is a good use of public funds.
- ✖ Need facilities statewide, not only in the region.



